



# Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201  
703.842.0740 • [asmfc.org](http://asmfc.org)

*Daniel McKiernan (MD), Chair*

*Doug Haymans (GA), Vice-Chair*

*Robert E. Beal, Executive Director*

*Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries*

## MEMORANDUM

December 19, 2025

TO: Commissioners; Proxies; American Eel Management Board; American Lobster Management Board; Atlantic Menhaden Management Board; Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board; Coastal Pelagics Management Board; Executive Committee; ISFMP Policy Board; Spiny Dogfish Management Board; Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board; and Winter Flounder Management Board

FROM: Robert E. Beal *REB*  
Executive Director

RE: ASMFC Winter Meeting: February 3 – 5, 2026 (TA 26-009)

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Winter Meeting will be February 3 – 5, 2026 at **The Westin Crystal City**. This will be a hybrid meeting (both in-person and remote) to allow for participation by Commissioners and interested stakeholders; the details of which will be provided two weeks prior to the meeting. A brief, preliminary agenda and public comment guidelines are included with this memorandum. Materials will be available January 21 on the Commission website at <https://asmfc.org/events/2026-winter-meeting/>.

A block of rooms is being held at The Westin Crystal City, 1800 Richmond Highway, Arlington, VA 22202. Lisa Carty will make Commissioner/Proxy reservations. Please [click here](#) to complete the Attendance and Accommodations Form. This form ensures we have accurate information on meeting attendance. **Please notify Lisa Carty of any changes to your travel plans that will impact your hotel reservations, otherwise you will incur no-show penalties.** We greatly appreciate your cooperation.

For all other attendees, please reserve your room online via our group link at [Book your group rate for Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission ASMFC Feb2026](#) or call Marriott directly at 888.236.2427 as soon as possible and mention the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to obtain the group room rate of \$196 plus tax single/dbl. Please be aware you must guarantee your room reservation with a major credit card or one night's advance payment. **Hotel reservations must be made by Thursday, January 8. Room availability will not be guaranteed beyond this date.** If you are being reimbursed by ASMFC for your travel, please make your reservation directly with the hotel. Reservations made through travel websites do not apply toward our minimum number of required reservations with the hotel. **Please note, cancellations at The Westin must be made by 4 PM two days before arrival to avoid penalty and an early departure fee of \$196 + tax will apply when checking out before the confirmed date.** If you have any problems regarding accommodations, please contact Lisa Carty at 703.842.0713 or [lcarty@asmfc.org](mailto:lcarty@asmfc.org).

We look forward to seeing you at the Winter Meeting. If the staff or I can provide any further assistance to you, please call us at 703.842.0740.

Enclosed: Preliminary Agenda, TA 26-009, and Travel Reimbursement Guidelines

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# Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

## Winter Meeting

February 3 – 5, 2026

### The Westin Crystal City

Arlington, Virginia

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## Public Comment Guidelines

To provide a fair opportunity for public input, the ISFMP Policy Board has approved the following guidelines for use at management board meetings:

**For issues that are not on the agenda**, management boards will continue to provide opportunities to the public to bring matters of concern to the board's attention at the start of each board meeting. Board chairs will ask members of the public to raise their hands to let the chair know they would like to speak. Depending upon the number of commenters, the board chair will decide how to allocate the available time on the agenda (typically 10 minutes) to the number of people who want to speak.

**For topics that are on the agenda**, but have not gone out for public comment, board chairs will provide limited opportunity for comment, taking into account the time allotted on the agenda for the topic. Chairs will have flexibility in deciding how to allocate comment opportunities; this could include hearing one comment in favor and one in opposition until the chair is satisfied further comments will not provide additional insight to the board.

**For agenda action items that have already gone out for public comment**, it is the Policy Board's intent to end the occasional practice of allowing extensive and lengthy public comments. Currently, board chairs have the discretion to decide what public comment to allow in these circumstances.

In addition, the following timeline has been established for the submission of written comments for issues for which the Commission has NOT established a specific public comment period (i.e., in response to proposed management action).

1. Comments received three weeks prior to the start of a meeting week (**January 12**) will be included in the briefing materials.
2. Comments received by **5 PM on Tuesday, January 27** will be included in supplemental materials.
3. Comments received by **10 AM on Friday, January 30** will be distributed electronically to Commissioners/Board members prior to the meeting.

The submitted comments must clearly indicate the commenter's expectation from the ASMFC staff regarding distribution. As with other public comment, it will be accepted via mail and email.

## Preliminary Agenda

*The agenda is subject to change. Bulleted items represent the anticipated major issues to be discussed or acted upon at the meeting. The final agenda will include additional items and may revise the bulleted items provided below. The agenda reflects the current estimate of time required for scheduled Board meetings. The Commission may adjust this agenda in accordance with the actual duration of Board meetings. Interested parties should anticipate Boards starting earlier or later than indicated herein.*

### **Tuesday, February 3**

#### **9 – 11 a.m. American Lobster Management Board**

- Consider Report from the Technical Committee on Board Tasks
- Consider Report from the Advisory Panel
- Consider Annual Data Updates of American Lobster and Jonah Crab Indicators
- Reports from Gulf of Maine States on Industry Surveys and Meetings
- Update on Request for Information for Alternative Gear Marking Framework

#### **11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Winter Flounder Management Board**

- Review 2025 Management Track Assessments for Gulf of Maine and Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic Stocks of Winter Flounder
- Set Specifications for Fishing Years 2026-2028
- Consider Fishery Management Plan Review for 2024 Fishing Year
- Elect Vice-Chair

#### **12:15 – 1:15 p.m. Lunch Break**

#### **1:15 – 2:15 p.m. Spiny Dogfish Management Board**

- Set Specifications for the 2026/2027 Fishing Year
- Review Spiny Dogfish Accountability Measures Framework
- Elect Vice-Chair

#### **2:30 – 3:30 p.m. American Eel Management Board**

- Update on Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species
- Consider Technical Committee Report on Board Tasks
  - Review of Aquaculture Provisions
  - Review of Florida Young of Year Survey

#### **3:45 – 4:45 p.m. Marine Recreational Information Program Presentation on Fishing Effort Survey**

**Wednesday, February 4**

10:15 a.m. – 11:45 p.m. Coastal Pelagics Management Board

- Consider Terms of Reference for Atlantic Migratory Group Cobia Stock Assessment
- Review Next Steps, Timeline, and Challenges for Cobia Management
  - Specification Setting Process
  - Evaluation of 2025 Regional Recreational Landings Against Targets
- Consider Cobia Fishery Management Plan Review for the 2024 Fishing Year
- Consider Spanish Mackerel Fishery Management Plan Review for the 2023 and 2024 Fishing Years
- Update on South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Spanish Mackerel Future Amendment

## **11:45 – 1:15 p.m. Luncheon for Legislative and Governor Appointee Commissioners**

**11:45 – 1:15 p.m.      Lunch Break**

1:15 – 3:30 p.m. Atlantic Menhaden Management Board

- Progress Update on Plan Development Team Drafting of Draft Addendum II for Public Comment
- Advisory Panel Report on 2025 Single-Species and Ecological Reference Points Stock Assessments
- Progress Update on Technical Committee Tasking on Changing Environmental Conditions

3:45 – 5:30 p.m. Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board

- Consider Regional Distribution of Black Sea Bass Liberalization for 2026-2027 Recreational Management Measures
- Consider Technical Committee Report

**Thursday, February 5**

## 8:30 – 10:45 a.m.      Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

- Board Guidance on Biological Reference Points
- Board Discussion on Work Group on Future Striped Bass Management: Composition of Work Group, Details, and Timelines for Work Group Tasks
- Consider NOAA Aquaculture Report on Atlantic Striped Bass

- Review 2025 Commissioner Survey
- Review Commission Guiding Documents
- Highly Migratory Species Update on Coastal Sharks
- Consider Habitat Management Series Report on Atlantic States Shell Recycling
- Review Noncompliance Findings, if necessary

**12:30 – 12:45 p.m.**

**Commission Business Session**

- Consider Noncompliance Recommendations, if necessary